

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner and Supervisory Examiner Melvin Pollack for granting a personal interview on August 17, 2006. This paper follows up on that interview.

The foregoing amendments in claims 4 and 34 define the invention with enhanced specificity to overcome the Section 112, second paragraph, rejections. Claims 4 and 34 are also amended so as not to depend from cancelled claim 2. Both claims 4 and 34 depend from claim 1.

The present invention relates to an information communication device, system, method and recording medium useful in the management of a "target device," e.g. a photocopier, by a managing device, e.g. a server 16 at a head office (Fig. 4).

Information regarding the target device is collected at the target device. A transmission processing section converts the collected information about the device into either mail data (in email format) or attached data. An information selecting section (e.g. at sub CPU 601e or at an associated PC 13) determines whether the collected information is converted to mail data or attached data. The collected and selected information is then transmitted to the manager (e.g. the server 12 at the head office or a managing PC 11b in a LAN at office D in Fig. 4). The prior art neither teaches or suggests any such selecting and transmission processing based on that selection. No email has attachments with such selected, sorted data about a target device. Where a transmission of any attachment is expressly disclosed in the principal reference, this transmission is in a direction opposite to that claimed.

Turning to the art rejections, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 1, 4-10 and 33 (claims 2 and 3 having been cancelled) under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by Motoyama et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,631,247, as well as the rejection of claims 34 and 35 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Motoyama in view of Wong et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,654,746 (claim 34) or Motoyama in view of Official Notice (claim 35).

Applicants again note that Motoyama teaches a network or networks (Fig. 11) that can include business machines, such as copiers or printers, that are managed via the Internet by a system administrator (e.g. 610, Fig. 12) or service center 502 (Fig. 11). Col. 14 relied on by the Examiner discusses an example where the devices being managed are two printers.

The Examiner notes that Motoyama uses email, and that email messages can use HTML coding for text format or Excel spreadsheet formatting.

The Examiner again cites, Motoyama Col. 14, lines 16-20, which describes a report sent to the user from the Resource Administration Station in using Excel or HTML. This is opposite the claimed direction flow for information, from a target device or an associated local PC, to a managing device.

At the interview, it was stressed, with reference to Applicants' Fig. 4, that there was a flow of information moving generally from the target devices to a managing device. As a corollary, it was noted that the claimed selecting and claimed transmission processing do not occur at the managing device, because the selected and processed information is transmitted "to said managing device." (Claim 1, line 10; claim 8, line 10; claim 9, line 9; claim 10, line 9 ("said" being "the") Emphasis supplied.)

At the interview, a possible amendment was discussed inserting "at the target device" (e.g. in line 2 of claim 1) to specify where the information collecting occurred. In the Interview Summary, the Examiner expressed this discussion as "directly tying the target device to the information selecting device."

Information about each target device is collected at that device, but the selecting and processing can occur either within the device itself (e.g. the sub CPU 601(e) of the device 30 shown in Fig. 3) or at a local PC 11 or 13 (Fig. 4) associated with a device 30. (See the specification at page 40, last 3 lines, to page 41, top 2 lines.) The specification and drawings therefore make it clear that the present invention is not limited to a situation where "selecting" occurs only due to the operation of a sub CPU,

or the like, formed as a part of the target device per se. Selecting and transmission processing can also occur at an associated PC, or an equivalent.

Information collection, selecting and data transmission processing in the present invention do not occur at the managing device; the selected mail and selected attached data are transmitted to the managing device.

Claims 1, and 8-10 make these distinctions in direction of data flow over Motoyama clearly. The prior art does not teach this disposition of functions, or this direction of transmission of selected mail data with selected attached data.

Also, importantly, Motoyama has no teaching that collected device information is selected to fall into data to be converted into attached data, or data to be converted into mail data. No mention of any kind of selection of data is mentioned by Motoyama. Rather, it appears that Motoyama converts the entire report into common Excel or HTML format.

At Col. 14, lines 25-40, there is a mention in Motoyama of a message sent directly from the printer to the Resource Administration Section. This is no more than Applicants acknowledge as prior art at pages 3-5 of the application. What is new is the claimed selection for transmission of certain target device information as attached data to avoid the security problems inherent in the transmission of email over the Internet, as also discussed at pages 3-5 of the specification. There is no teaching that any of the information sent in Motoyama from a printer to the Resource Administration section is sent as selected attached data.

All of the pending claims require an information selecting section that selects which of the collected device information should be converted into mail data and which of the collected device information should be converted into attached data. Motoyama fails to teach or suggest this feature.

The Examiner's reliance on Motoyama Col. 17, lines 58-63, (referencing Fig. 19B) concerns the attaching of executable files to an email. However, this use of

attachments in Motoyama does not relate to the transmission of information about a target device to said managing device, as claimed. This discussion in Motoyama relates to the transmission of an executable file to the target device. As detailed at the top of Col. 18, when "clicked" by a user and executed, the attached file "will cause certain testing, gather of information, controlling, or logging of information of the attached printer [the particular type of machine being managed in this exemplary description]." Fig. 22 and related discussion at Col. 19 describes an automatically executing file of this type. Figs. 25-28 and the discussion beginning at Col. 20, line 6, also describes the use of email to transmit the information to, e.g., the service machine 254 (Fig. 5) or the Service Center 502 (Fig. 11).

Nor does this disclosure at Col. 17 of Motoyama suggest that some of the collected device information is selected to be converted into attached data, while other collected device information is selected to be converted into mail data. The attached executable file of Motoyama is not collected device information.

In sum, Motoyama does not teach or suggest the claimed selection of collected data for either mail data or attached data, or the transmission of such selected data from a target device to a managing device.

The secondary reference to Wong teaches compression, but does not supply the fundamental deficiencies of Motoyama noted above. The same is true of the Official Notice of privacy filters. Public keys and general references to transmission of sensitive data does not teach or suggest the claimed selecting of information about a target device for transmission of email or attached data according to that selection and sort to a managing device.

In claim 4, the Examiner objects to the wording "indicative of a state of use." Applicants have adopted the Examiner's suggested language to overcome this rejection. "Indicative of state of use of said management target device" is now "indicating the state of use of said management target device." As noted earlier, "state of use" is used and described extensively in the specification, eg. on page 34 and in Table 1. Information about such a state of use is simply that, e.g. a total copy count.

In rejecting claim 33, the Examiner equates the word "dedicated" with HTML or Excel. However, as noted in their last response, Applicants use the term "dedicated" in its normal, well-accepted sense as describing a program that is devoted to use in a particular system, here to produce the selected attached data, not some generic program, code or format such as HTML or Excel. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and request reconsideration.

Applicants also respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 34 under Section 112, second paragraph, on the ground that the work "higher" is indefinite with respect to a compression rate. The claim is not directed to any absolute value of this rate, but a comparison of the compression rates used for email and attachments. Claim 34 is amended to make this distinction more clearly. These amendments were shown to the Examiner at the August 17 interview and are believed to be acceptable to overcome the Section 112 rejection. Applicants respectfully request a reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection of claim 34.

For these and other reasons noted above, Applicants urge that the claims as amended clearly define patentable subject matter over the art of record, and that this application is otherwise in condition for allowance.

Dated: September 7, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

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